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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 17, 2022.

I hereby appoint the Honorable SHEILA JACKSON LEE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 10, 2022, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

MINORITY HEALTH DISPARITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BARRAGÁN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Madam Speaker, today I rise with a great sense of gratitude. Gratitude for the opportunity to serve the people's House and gratitude for passing my first standalone bill, H.R. 189, the John Lewis National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Endowment Revitalization Act. It passed the House and Senate, and on a bipartisan basis to

boot. The bill is on its way to the President's desk, and on Friday, President Joe Biden will sign it in a White House ceremony that this kid from the harbor area of Los Angeles never dreamed was possible.

This is a full circle moment for me, one that made me tear up last night as I sat to reflect how I got here and how my passion on the issue of disparities in health took shape.

In 1998 as a young college student, I had an opportunity to work as an intern in the Clinton White House. I worked in the Office of Public Liaison doing African-American outreach under Ben Johnson and Minyon Moore. It was during my work there that I learned about the issue of racial health disparities. At the time, United States Surgeon General David Satcher highlighted the issue, and it became a passion of mine.

A year later I would continue my work on the issue and in the healthcare space at the NAACP with Hilary Shelton. Ben Johnson and Hilary Shelton mentored and inspired me. They encouraged me to keep up my work on the issue.

Today, as a Member of Congress, the issue of racial health disparities and the need for us to close the healthcare gap is among my top priorities. In that light, during the 116th Congress when I was in my second term, an opportunity arose to work with organizations like the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools and others on a bill to help fund research on health disparities at schools of excellence.

I remember approaching our friend, the late John Lewis, about the bill. He encouraged me to fight and to get it across the finish line, and he agreed to become an original cosponsor.

In this Congress, the 117th Congress, I renamed the bill in honor of my friend, the late John Lewis. H.R. 189 is now the John Lewis National Institute on Minority Health and Health Dispari-

ties Research Endowment Revitalization Act.

I thank the gentleman from Georgia, Representative BUDDY CARTER, for being a co-lead on the bill. The Senate bill, S. 320, was introduced and championed by Senators BILL CASSIDY and BRIAN SCHATZ. I am grateful for their work to get this across the finish line and Senator CASSIDY for being gracious.

H.R. 189 will, once again, allow for current and former NIMHD or Health Resources & Services Administration Centers of Excellence to receive research endowment funding, money that is critical in the fight to reduce minority health disparities.

The research endowment program at the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities provides funding to the endowments of academic institutions across the country. Schools like Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science will qualify; Morehouse School of Medicine, the University of Puerto Rico School of Dental Medicine, Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine, Xavier University of Louisiana College of Pharmacy, and many more will be eligible to receive funding under this bill.

The goals of the program include promoting minority health and health disparities research capacity and infrastructure, increasing the diversity and strength of the scientific workforce, and enhancing the recruitment and retention of individuals from health disparity populations that are underrepresented in the scientific workforce.

On Friday, 24 years after getting my start in politics at the White House, I will be back there again, this time as a Member of Congress to see H.R. 189 become law and move us one step closer to ending the disparities in public health facing communities of color.

For that I am grateful.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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A PROMISE TO FIRST DO NO HARM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, when I first became a doctor, I made a promise that I would never perform, assist, or support in any abortion or any abortion procedures. All doctors take an oath. They swear to first do no harm. I made a promise that I would never participate in the taking of a human life.

At 10 weeks a baby in their mother's womb has developed a beating heart. At 11 weeks, the baby will have developed elbows, fingers, and toes. And at 27 weeks, a baby inside the womb can hear their mother's voice. It is clear that these children are human—constructed in the image of God—and worthy of protection and worthy of love.

It is time to protect human life, it is time to protect the unborn, and it is time to end this egregious practice of abortion.

RECOGNIZING THE WORK OF DR. GEORGE HRUZA

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of Dr. George Hruza.

A graduate of New York University, Dr. Hruza went on to complete both a dermatology residency at New York University Medical Center as well as a laser surgery fellowship at Harvard Medical School. Later, Dr. Hruza completed a Mohs and dermatologic surgery fellowship at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with Dr. Fred Mohs.

Dr. Fred Mohs developed this revolutionary surgery—a technique that allows for the precise removal and the repair of skin cancer.

Throughout his career, Dr. Hruza has proven himself to be a leader in the field of dermatology. His tireless commitment to his patients and their families has undoubtedly saved countless lives.

Dr. Hruza has come to Washington and done skin cancer screenings for members of staff and Members of Congress—several who might be present here today.

As the American Academy of Dermatology's president, Dr. Hruza's relentless advocacy for innovation has helped to shape the way that skin cancer today is treated in the United States. Skin cancers were previously deadly. My own grandfather died from skin cancer, a skin cancer that would be treated today by someone like Dr. Hruza and cured.

It is my privilege to call Dr. George Hruza a leader, a colleague, and a friend of the United States Congress. As he continues his work as the United Skin Specialists Missouri director, I wish Dr. Hruza every continued success; his success in working to treat patients, his success in developing innovation, and his success as one of the leaders in dermatology not just in the

United States but throughout the world.

CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Madam Speaker, as the coauthor of the bipartisan Strengthening Career and Technical Education in the 21st Century Act—the largest reform of skills-based education in more than a dozen years—I rise today to celebrate one institution that has become a national exemplar.

I am honored to join Congressman AUGUST PFLUGER from Texas in recognizing Dr. Gregory Williams at Odessa College. Odessa College has been named a top-10 community college by the Aspen Institute. Dr. Williams has seen both enrollment as well as students with passing grades increase year after year.

When we reformed CTE in 2018 and increased Federal funding by over 10 percent, we did so with educators like Dr. Williams in mind.

I commend Dr. Williams and Odessa College for their tremendous success. I will continue fighting for robust funding for skills-based and vocational education funding so that programs like Odessa's can flourish in my State of Illinois as well as across the country.

NATIONAL AMERICORPS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, this week many people will be celebrating National AmeriCorps Week. I will not be one of them. AmeriCorps has been around for almost 30 years, and in that time we have learned never to underestimate the ability of the Federal Government to muck things up.

No one denies that AmeriCorps began with good intentions, and I applaud the philanthropic spirit of those who volunteer out of a genuine desire to help those in need. However, I cannot applaud a bloated bureaucratic organization that is the poster child for fraud and mismanagement.

AmeriCorps is entrusted with 1.1 billion taxpayer dollars every single year. And every single year AmeriCorps proves it is an expert at wasting taxpayer funds.

For example, some AmeriCorps programs cost taxpayers four to eight times more money than programs that perform identical services. Even more concerning is the fact that neither Congress, the Inspector General, nor AmeriCorps itself have an idea of how taxpayer dollars are being managed. In fact, AmeriCorps' financial statements are so bad that they have not been able to be audited for the past 5 years.

According to AmeriCorps' Inspector General, if this occurred at a private organization there would be a "whole-sale resignation or firing of the leadership team, and the public would be shorting their stock."

Even more concerning is the lack of oversight AmeriCorps provides over its grantees that are plagued with fraudulent activity. For example, a Hawaiian nonprofit executive was recently sentenced to 46 months in prison for embezzling over \$500,000 from AmeriCorps, and a school district in St. Louis was found guilty of encouraging AmeriCorps volunteers to falsely inflate time sheets.

The private sector often does the same work as AmeriCorps but at a fraction of the price and with far less waste, fraud, and mismanagement.

It is our job as Members of the House of Representatives to ensure that taxpayer funds are protected. The power of the purse is one of our most important constitutional duties. We therefore must stop feeding the black hole that is AmeriCorps and instead empower States and local governments to meet the needs of their residents.

The last time AmeriCorps' programs were reauthorized was in 2009 with the passage of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act which was named in honor of the late Senator who was the author of the legislation that governs many of AmeriCorps' programs.

Yet, despite the support for national service, Senator Kennedy himself emphasized the importance of proper stewardship of taxpayer dollars, noting during a 1993 floor speech on the establishment of the corporation that "Congress will not, and should not, fund a program if it is unsuccessful."

I agree with him. AmeriCorps has had 29 years to prove itself, and the only thing it has proven is that it is a drain on taxpayers and a massive disappointment. This is a failed agency that needs to be overhauled completely or just eliminated.

□ 1015

CONGRATULATING PRESIDENT BIDEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate President Biden for the progress our Nation has made this past year. In early 2021, the President took office during a global crisis and was determined to get America back on track. He knew we needed a comeback. He knew we needed to focus on building a better America.

So what did President Biden do? He invested in the American people, and he invested big. The boom was beginning.

In March 2021, the American Rescue Plan was signed into law. In total, a historic \$1.9 trillion were put to work for the American people during the severe public health and economic crisis caused by COVID.